REMARKS

Claims 5, 10 and 32-36 currently appear in this application. The Office Action of July 24, 2002, has been carefully studied. These claims define novel and unobvious subject matter under Sections 102 and 103 of 35 U.S.C., and therefore should be allowed. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration, entry of the present amendment, and formal allowance of the claims.

Claim Objections

Claim 5 is objected to because the term "pant" in line 12 should be --plant--.

The present amendment corrects this self-evident typographical error in claim 5.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 5, 10, and 31-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventors, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. The claims have now been amended to recite "processing" as covering all of the types of processing to which a plant

or edible part of a plant is subjected. Support for this amendment can be found in the specification as filed at page 8, lines 18-20.

Claims 5, 10, and 31-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claims 5 and 33, the independent claims, have been rewritten to make it clear that the inhibitory agent has an oxygen-eliminating activity and that the effective amount of trehalose for inhibiting oxygen elimination.

Art Rejections

Claims 5, 10, and 31-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maruta et al. as supported by Cardona.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. As disclosed in the specification as filed at page 10, lines 16-25, the combination of trehalose and pullulan or cyclodextrin exerts a stronger reduction-inhibitor activity of plant active oxygen eliminating activity, which is neither disclosed nor suggested in any of the cited references.

Claims 5, 10, and 31-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maruta et al. as supported by Cardona in view of Mandai.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. As noted above, the present specification states that the combination of pullulan and trehalose or cyclodextrin and trehalose exerts an improved reduction inhibitory activity for plant active oxygen eliminating activity. This synergistic effect is nether taught nor suggested by any combination of the cited references.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are now in condition for allowance, and favorable action thereon is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

BROWDY AND NEIMARK, P.L.L.C.
Attorneys for Applicant(s)

By _____
Anne M. Kornbau
Registration No. 25,884

Telephone No.: (202) 628-5197
Facsimile No.: (202) 737-3528
AMK:nmp
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5. (Ninth Amendment) A method for inhibiting the decrease of naturally occurring active-oxygen-eliminating activity in a fresh plant wherein the decrease in said activity is associated with ~~slicing, disruption, or boiling~~ **processing** said fresh plant or an edible part of said fresh plant, which comprises a step of

incorporating homogeneously, in an aqueous system, at least 1% of an inhibitory agent based on said fresh plant or said edible part on a dry solid basis into said fresh plant or an edible part of said fresh plant before or after slicing or disrupting said fresh plant or said edible part, or during boiling said fresh ~~pant~~ **plant** or said edible ~~plant~~**part**, said inhibitory agent **(i)** having an active-oxygen-eliminating activity**, and (ii)** comprising **as** an effective ~~amount of~~**ingredient** trehalose **in an amount of at least 20 w/w% trehalose in a dry solid basis** and optionally at least one member selected from the group consisting of pullulan and cyclodextrin~~, and containing at least about 20 w/w% trehalose on a dry solid basis~~.

33. (Twice Amended) A method for inhibiting the decrease of naturally occurring active-oxygen-

eliminating activity in a fresh plant wherein the decrease in said activity is associated with ~~slicing, disruption, or boiling~~ processing of said fresh plant or an edible part of said fresh plant, or when an edible part of the fresh plant is disrupted, which comprises a step of

homogeneously incorporating, in an aqueous system, at least 1% of an inhibitory agent based on said fresh plant or said edible part on a dry solid basis before or after slicing or disrupting said fresh plant or said edible part, or during boiling said fresh plant or edible part, said inhibitory agent having an oxygen-eliminating activity, comprising as an effective ~~amount of~~ingredient trehalose in an amount of at least about 20 w/w% trehalose on a dry solid basis and optionally at least one member selected from the group consisting of pullulan and cyclodextrin~~, and containing least about 20 w/w% trehalose on a dry solid basis~~.